

SECOND LEVEL ADOPTION MATCHING TEAM

This statewide team was originally developed in 2000 to advocate for waiting families to expedite placements, update system records on adoptive families and to break down geographical barriers for waiting families and children available for adoption. The Second Level Adoption Matching team goals have expanded over the last four years to include serving as a forum to discuss and resolve adoption issues faced by field staff, assist in defining best adoption practice for the CD, and completing quarterly adoption peer record reviews as part of the statewide Continuous Quality Improvement process.

The SLM team consists of a total of fifteen adoption representatives, which include two from each of the seven geographical areas of the state, and a Program Development Specialist from Central Office. The team meets every two months to conduct a preliminary match for waiting families and children according to age ranges that the families will accept. The age range is rotated at every meeting so that a variety of children can be matched with waiting families. The age ranges matched are divided into groups; 4-8 years, 9-14 years, 15-18 years, and extraordinary medical needs.

At the meeting, the Area adoption representatives bring as many waiting family profiles as they wish per matching session and as many children or sibling profiles as they wish, within the specified age range to match with other areas. Out of state families are included in the preliminary matching. The preliminary matches are logged and then the children's profiles are forwarded to the family's service worker. The family's service worker is required to forward and discuss each child profile with the adoptive family and return an outcome form with the results of the match.

Waiting adoptive families can be referred to the Second Level Adoption Matching Team through their local service worker. Waiting children can be referred to their Area adoption representative by the child's social service worker. Out-of-state adoptive families are referred to the CD Central Office adoption unit. Through the SLM team representatives, a list of available out of state families is distributed periodically to the counties for their consideration. Copies of all out of state home studies submitted to Central Office are available to any field staff upon request.

These efforts have produced positive outcome for many families and children. Over 30 children have found permanent adoptive homes since the inception of this matching process that otherwise had no apparent adoptive resource. One sibling group found permanency through this process after having been in care for seven years.

In addition to matching, the Second Level Matching Team has developed an appropriate

Media Adoption Profile; produced policy that will implement a uniform adoption subsidy case file; created a form to document the progress of Family Support Team meetings for adoptive children voluntarily placed outside of the home; has redesigned peer review tool questions to better represent adoptive family cases; and has assisted in the development of policy by providing feedback to the Program Development Specialist. The Second Level Adoption Matching Team will continue to look for new and innovative ways to match waiting families with waiting children.